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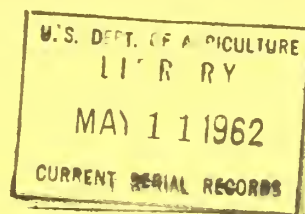
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FOREST SURVEY RELEASE NO. 1  
1958



## IDAHO LUMBER PRODUCTION, 1956

by

Alvin K. Wilson

Division of Forest Economics



INTERMOUNTAIN FOREST & RANGE EXPERIMENT STATION

Forest Service

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Ogden, Utah

Reed W. Bailey, Director



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### HIGHLIGHTS

Idaho sawmills set a new record for production in 1956 by turning out 1,608,504,000 board feet of lumber, as determined by a survey recently completed by the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce. This represents an increase of 15 percent over the 1,399,101,000 board feet reported in the Census of Manufactures for 1954, the latest year for which comparable data are available.<sup>1/</sup>

Sawmills in north Idaho<sup>2/</sup> produced nearly 1,292 million board feet or 80 percent of the State's total output, and south Idaho mills sawed 317 million board feet or 20 percent of the total.

Three counties--Kootenai, Nez Perce, and Bonner--were the highest producers in the State, turning out 15 percent, 13 percent, and 10 percent, respectively, of the State's total production. Together these counties accounted for nearly two-fifths (38.3 percent) of Idaho's 1956 lumber pile.

Douglas-fir led all species with a cut of nearly 399 million board feet, or about one-quarter of Idaho's total. The true firs (grand, white, and alpine), with 305 million board feet, were practically tied with ponderosa pine (304 million board feet) for second place, each making up 19 percent of all lumber produced. Engelmann spruce (14 percent) and western white pine (12 percent) occupied fourth and fifth places, respectively.

By far the greatest part of Idaho's lumber was cut by mills having annual capacities for 10 million board feet or more. These large mills produced 1,166 million board feet or more than 72 percent of the State total. Mills with yearly production of 5 to 10 million board feet sawed 12 percent, and those in the 1 to 5 million class sawed 13 percent, leaving slightly more than 2 percent of the total for mills having smaller outputs. The survey shows that 311 sawmills were active for all or part of 1956.

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<sup>1/</sup> When this report was prepared, published Census figures for 1955 were not available, but it is understood that Census estimates will show 1955 production intermediate between 1954 and 1956.

<sup>2/</sup> North of the Salmon River (see fig. 1).

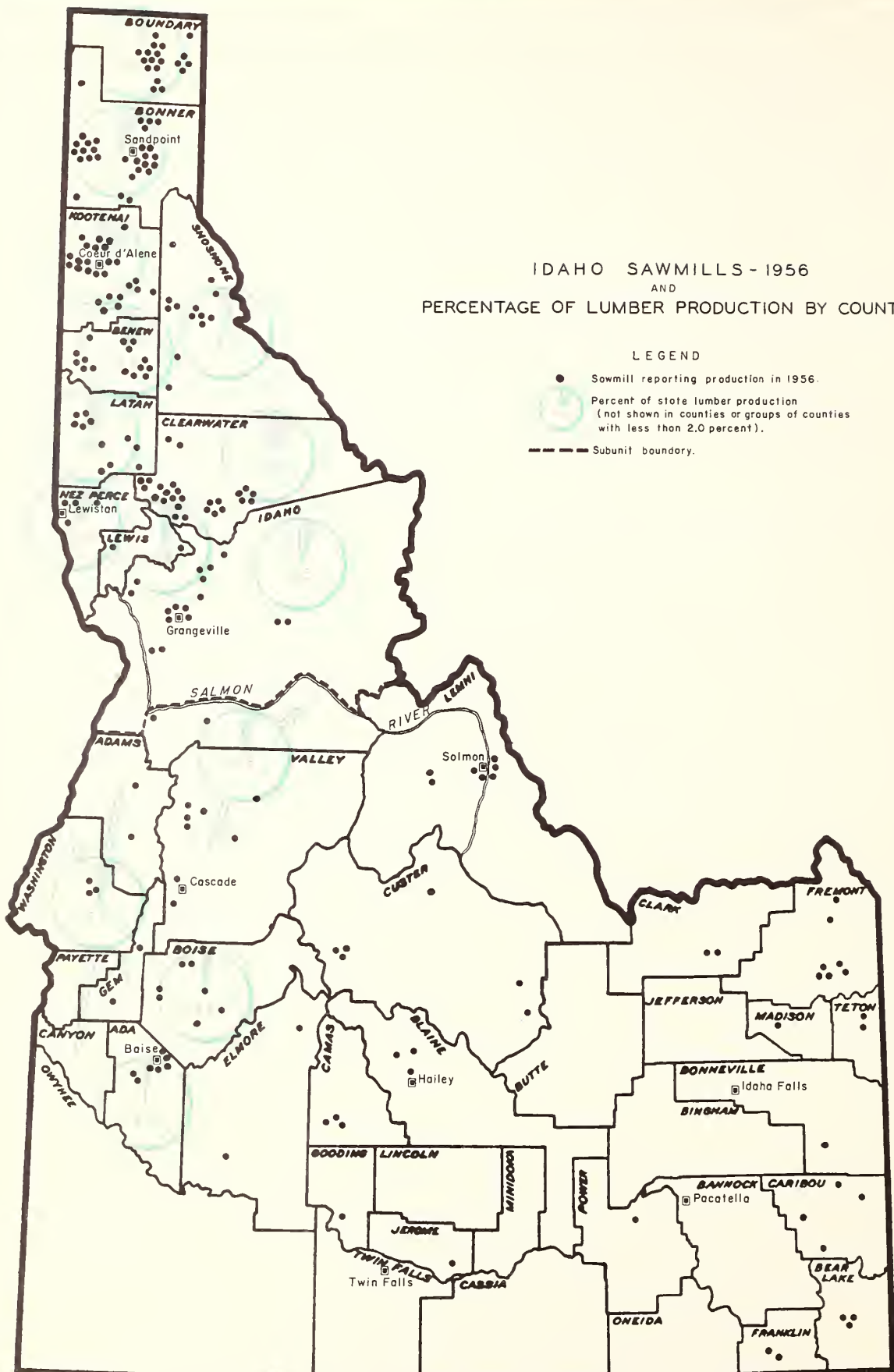


FIGURE 1.



## DETAILS

### Subunits

North Idaho has consistently produced more than two-thirds, and in recent years has been producing more than four-fifths, of the State's lumber (table 1).

Table 1.--Idaho lumber production by subunits, 1948, 1950, and 1956<sup>1/</sup>

Subunit	1956		1950		1948	
	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent
	<u>M b.f.</u>		<u>M b.f.</u>		<u>M b.f.</u>	
North	1,291,531	80.3	925,162	82.1	786,555	71.3
South	316,973	19.7	201,639	17.9	317,094	28.7
Total	1,608,504	100.0	1,126,801	100.0	1,103,649	100.0

<sup>1/</sup> Data by subunits not available for intervening years.

North Idaho's cut of 1,291,531,000 board feet was produced by 208 mills while 103 mills were active in turning out south Idaho's cut of 316,973,000 board feet. Between 1950 and 1956, north Idaho's lumber production increased 40 percent and south Idaho's gained 57 percent.

### Counties

Kootenai County led all counties in the State by producing 15.0 percent of Idaho's lumber (table 2). Nez Perce County, with 13.2 percent, was next in order, followed by Bonner County with 10.1 percent. With only 24 percent of the State's active mills, these three counties produced 38 percent of the State's lumber. In south Idaho, Gem and Valley counties were the leading lumber producers,<sup>3/</sup> and between them accounted for nearly half of south Idaho's output.

### Mill Classes

All sawmills were grouped into several classes according to their annual lumber production shown in table 3. There were 37 mills in the 10 million and over class, which produced 72.5 percent of all lumber. In other terms, 12 percent of the mills cut nearly three-quarters of the State's lumber output. At the other end of the scale, 139 mills each producing less than 500,000 board feet per year (or 45 percent of all mills) cut only 1 percent of the State's total.

<sup>3/</sup> For reporting purposes in table 2, Gem and Valley Counties have been combined with neighboring counties to avoid the possibility of disclosing an individual mill's operations.

Table 2.--Idaho lumber production by subunits, counties, and species, 1956

Subunit and County	Active saw-mills	Lumber production by species							All species		
		Ponderosa pine	White <sup>1</sup> / pine	Lodgepole pine	Douglas-fir	True <sup>2</sup> / firs	Engelmann spruce	Western larch	Other <sup>3</sup> / species	Volume	Percent
Number - - - - -Thousands of board feet, lumber tally-											
NORTHERN											
Beneviah	23	10,366	4,424	30	14,603	15,437	10,495	8,111	1,779	65,245	4.1
Bonner	37	8,603	22,162	60	34,541	19,180	37,919	26,709	13,164	162,308	10.1
Boundary	33	1,654	3,579	25	12,185	2,237	54,987	11,923	720	87,310	5.4
Clearwater	23	24,060	18,727	0	54,707	45,438	2,092	11,794	2,527	159,345	9.9
Idaho <sup>4</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	17	47,132	61	65	31,602	20,175	3,214	1,983	356	104,588	6.5
Kootenai	33	13,558	58,851	280	36,164	43,047	58,251	26,326	5,243	241,720	15.0
Latah	16	14,746	14,131	24	22,645	19,691	21,360	10,935	2,658	106,190	6.6
Lewis	6	21,152	7,543	0	25,288	36,405	6,368	5,797	3,021	105,574	6.6
Nez Perce	5	25,523	48,642	0	33,046	56,279	11,398	12,656	24,688	212,232	13.2
Shoshone	15	147	6,082	228	18,814	12,832	530	4,846	3,510	46,989	2.9
Total, Northern		208	166,941	712	283,595	270,721	206,614	121,080	57,666	1,291,531	80.3
SOUTHERN											
Ada	7	17,365	0	111	12,545	1,169	512	0	0	31,702	2.0
Boise	9	16,293	0	0	14,611	11,089	0	0	0	41,993	2.6
Caribou	5	0	0	106	1,575	15	0	0	0	1,696	.1
Custer	7	0	0	162	904	0	104	0	0	1,170	.1
Elmore	4	12,842	0	0	5,673	0	0	0	0	18,515	1.1
Fremont	10	0	0	2,755	1,859	0	0	0	0	4,614	.3
Lemhi	10	6,494	0	0	8,158	0	130	0	0	14,782	.9
Adams, Canyon, Gem, <sup>5</sup> / <sub>5</sub>	9	48,982	0	4,577	35,404	10,675	2,254	3,512	0	105,404	6.6
Washington											
Bannock, Bear Lake,											
Franklin, Power	10	0	0	598	2,080	218	1,005	0	0	3,901	.2
Blaine, Camas	8	5,120	0	88	4,720	34	108	0	35	10,105	.6
Bonneville, Madison, Teton	6	0	0	1,382	1,603	0	1,350	0	17	4,352	.3
Butte, Clark	4	0	0	0	2,325	0	115	0	0	2,440	.2
Cassia, Gooding, Jerome,	4	0	0	16	0	0	240	0	52	308	( <sup>6</sup> / <sub>6</sub> )
Twin Falls											
Valley, Idaho <sup>4</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	10	29,618	<u>7</u> / <u>108</u>	3,038	23,463	10,689	8,860	215	0	75,991	4.7
Total, Southern		103	136,714	108	12,833	33,889	14,678	3,727	104	316,973	19.7
Total		311	303,655	184,310	13,545	304,610	221,292	124,807	57,770	1,608,504	100.0

1/ Practically all western white pine but includes a very small amount of whitebark and/or limber pine.

2/ Includes grand, white, and alpine firs.

3/ Includes western hemlock, western redcedar, and cottonwood (88 M b.f. of the latter).

4/ Idaho County is divided by the Salmon River and lies partly in each subunit.

5/ Counties have been combined to avoid disclosing individual operations.

6/ Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

7/ Reported as white pine but probably limber or whitebark pine.

Table 3.--Idaho lumber production by subunits and mill production classes, 1956

Production class	North		South		State		Active mills
	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent	
<u>M b.f. per yr.</u>	<u>M b.f.</u>		<u>M b.f.</u>		<u>M b.f.</u>		<u>Number</u>
Less than 500	7,813	0.6	7,997	2.5	15,810	1.0	139
500 - 999	8,033	.6	9,287	2.9	17,320	1.1	27
1,000 - 4,999	170,239	13.2	39,283	12.4	209,522	13.0	80
5,000 - 9,999	133,394	10.3	66,112	20.9	199,506	12.4	28
10,000 and over	972,052	75.3	194,294	61.3	1,166,346	72.5	37
Total	1,291,531	100.0	316,973	100.0	1,608,504	100.0	311

For further examination of trends in production by mill classes, data for past years for north Idaho alone must be used because data for all of Idaho are not readily available in this form (table 4).

Table 4.--Percentages of north Idaho lumber production by mill classes, 1956, 1950, 1948

Production class	Production by years		
	1956	1950	1948
M bd. ft. per year	- - - - P e r c e n t - - - -		
Less than 500	0.6	1.4	4.0
500 to 999	.6	2.6	2.0
1,000 to 4,999	13.2	13.5	14.6
5,000 to 9,999	10.3	6.5	14.5
10,000 and over	75.3	76.0	64.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The data show a general decline in the percentage of lumber turned out by all mill classes except the very largest, although the mills in the middle class (1,000 to 4,999 M board feet per year) have held their percentage nearly level.

North Idaho's 208 active sawmills had an average production of 6,209,284 board feet per mill for 1956, while south Idaho's 103 active mills averaged 3,077,408 board feet per mill for the year. This serves to point up not only the difference in the number of mills in the two subunits of the State, but also the fact that the average mill in north Idaho is considerably larger than the average mill in south Idaho.

## Species

The proportion of lumber cut by species for the whole State is largely determined by their occurrence in north Idaho's output because of its high proportion of the State's total output (table 5). Douglas-fir made up nearly one-quarter of Idaho's lumber production to lead all species. The true firs, with 19 percent, were second but were closely followed by ponderosa pine. Fourth place was held by Engelmann spruce (nearly 14 percent), and western white pine was fifth at 12 percent. Though ponderosa pine ranked fifth in north Idaho, it led all species in south Idaho.

Table 5.--Idaho lumber production by subunits and species, 1956

Species	North		South		State	
	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent	Volume	Percent
	M b.f.		M b.f.		M b.f.	
Douglas-fir	283,595	21.9	114,920	36.3	398,515	24.8
True firs	270,721	21.0	33,889	10.7	304,610	18.9
Ponderosa pine	166,941	12.9	136,714	43.1	303,655	18.9
Engelmann spruce	206,614	16.0	14,678	4.6	221,292	13.8
Western white pine <sup>1/</sup>	184,202	14.3	27,108	(3/)	184,310	11.5
Western larch	121,080	9.4	3,727	1.2	124,807	7.8
Western redcedar	50,435	3.9	--	--	50,435	3.1
Lodgepole pine	712	(3/)	12,833	4.1	13,545	.8
Western hemlock	7,230	.6	--	--	7,230	.4
Other <sup>4/</sup>	1	(3/)	104	(3/)	105	(3/)
Total	1,291,531	100.0	316,973	100.0	1,608,504	100.0

<sup>1/</sup> Includes 1,318 M b.f. of whitebark or limber pines.

<sup>2/</sup> Reported as western white pine, but probably whitebark or limber.

<sup>3/</sup> Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

<sup>4/</sup> Practically all cottonwood.

Also interesting to note are the shifts in species rank that have occurred since 1948 (table 6). Douglas-fir moved from third place in 1948 to first place in 1956. The true firs were fourth in 1948 and 1954, but moved to second place in 1956. Ponderosa pine was the leading species until 1956, when it fell to third in importance. Engelmann spruce rose from seventh place (1948) to fourth in 1956, and western white pine, second-place holder in 1948, fell to fifth place in 1956. In actual volumes sawed, all species show increases except ponderosa pine and white pine, although lodgepole pine declined somewhat from its high of 1954. These shifts indicate that, as old-growth stands of ponderosa pine and white pine become increasingly scarce, the industry has become considerably less selective as far as species are concerned and is attaining a much higher level of utilization of associated species than prevailed in earlier years.

Table 6.--Idaho lumber production by species,  
1948, 1954, and 1956

Species	1956	1954	1948
- - -Thousands of board feet- - -			
Douglas-fir	398,515	316,728	214,501
True firs	304,610	212,902	115,875
Ponderosa pine	303,655	342,128	417,081
Engelmann spruce	221,292	150,696	17,857
Western white pine	184,310	218,062	225,102
Western larch	124,807	94,999	88,250
Western redcedar	50,435	38,863	17,888
Lodgepole pine	13,545	18,431	5,176
Western hemlock	7,230	4,571	1,807
Other	105	1,721	112
Total	1,608,504	1,399,101	1,103,649

#### SURVEY METHOD

The survey of Idaho's 1956 lumber production was conducted under the terms of a cooperative arrangement between the Forest Service and the Bureau of the Census. The basic mailing list of lumber producers provided by the Bureau of the Census from the 1954 Census of Manufactures was brought up to date with the help of national forest supervisors and the State forester, and from industry directories. Inquiries were mailed to all producers on the revised list. Replies obtained from the mailed questionnaires accounted for 1,528,265,000 board feet, or 95 percent of the State's total production.

Since replies were obtained from all mills having annual outputs of 5 million board feet and over, no further sampling of large mills was necessary. It was necessary to estimate annual production rates only for nonresponding mills in the following three classes: (1) those producing between 1 and 4.999 million board feet per year; (2) those producing 0.500 to 0.999 million board feet per year, and (3) those producing less than 0.500 million board feet per year. Estimated nonrespondent production for these three classes was based on estimates obtained through field contacts with 25, 10, and 5 percent, respectively, of the nonrespondent mills. These estimates were then added to the total reported in mailed replies to obtain the total production estimate for the State.



## ACCURACY OF SURVEY

Individual mill production reports were obtained from 203 active mills, totaling 1,528,265,000 board feet, or 95 percent of Idaho's 1956 lumber production. An additional 80,239,000 board feet, or 5 percent of the total, was estimated for 108 active nonrespondent mills from the field sample. The error of the estimated part of the production is 12.74 percent, and the sampling error for the State's total production is 0.86 percent.



